

# HARPSWELL *BULLETIN*

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News for Harpswell Residents & Property Owners from the Town Office – Nov. 2008

Town Web Site: [www.harpswell.maine.gov](http://www.harpswell.maine.gov)

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## HEATING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

The winter of 2008-09 is shaping up to be a very difficult winter season for many people. The Town wants to ensure that its residents are aware of three programs the Town is affiliated with which are available to assist low- to moderate-income residents with heating fuel costs for this coming winter season. Please contact Linda Strickland at the Town Office at 833-5771 for more information and to schedule appointments for the following programs:

**LIHEAP:** Town staff is assisting with the application in-take process for this federally funded heating assistance program.

**General Assistance:** The Town continues to offer heating assistance through its general assistance program. Assistance with other basic necessities is also available through this program.

**Harpswell Heating Assistance Program:** The Town developed this program to help qualifying families with heating costs and appropriated \$10,000 at the 2008 Town Meeting. In addition, donations of over \$4,400 have been received to date for this very worthwhile program, including a very generous \$3,000 donation from the Harpswell Festival organization.

Also be aware of the **2-1-1** service. Dialing 211 will connect you with a trained specialist who can provide information and referral to many programs and services throughout Maine, including heating assistance. It is free, confidential, and available 24 hours a day. *Cell phone access varies, so if you cannot reach 211, please call 1-877-463-6207.*

## FEES

Selectmen are asking for public comment as they consider raising fees for moorings and tire disposal, and charging for notary services. Mooring fees for residents and taxpayers may increase from \$12 to \$18, non-residents from \$60 to \$90 and rentals from \$50 to \$70. More information regarding the other proposed charges is available on the Town's web site at [www.harpswell.maine.gov](http://www.harpswell.maine.gov).

## STATUS OF IMPROVEMENTS TO TOWN-OWNED LANDS

### Giant's Stairs, Bailey Island

Staff and various committee members worked on a grant application last year to make trail improvements to the Giant's Stairs. The Town was successful in being awarded a \$20,000 grant from the Maine Recreation Trails Grant Program which enabled the hiring of trail builders from the Maine Conservation Corps to implement the proposed trail rehabilitation. They, along with many great volunteers, have been working since mid-September on the project. The project is expected to be completed by mid-November. The Town encourages everyone to visit the new and improved trail as it is spectacular!

### **Tide Mill Cove Landing, South Harpswell**

The Board of Selectmen held several public meetings and workshops concerning Tide Mill Cove Landing in the past year with many abutters and various committee members participating. Recently, the Board of Selectmen approved a landscape plan, which includes four parking spaces, a kiosk, signage, a turnaround and a path to the shore, which will make the site more user friendly to the public. The plan will be implemented late fall or spring. Hand-carried boats, such as canoes and kayaks, may be launched at the site. Come enjoy the incredible reversing falls!

### **Mitchell Field, West Harpswell**

Members of the Mitchell Field Implementation Committee have made significant improvements to the site including the removal of chain link fencing along the waterfront, a well-maintained lawn area at the waterfront and a new front entrance. In addition, wooded trails have been cleared for hikers and cross-country skiers, small granite-like benches have been placed along the perimeter and dog clean-up stations have been installed. MFIC continues to work toward opening the roadway to vehicular traffic all the way to the waterfront and clearing various hazards off the superstructure of the pier. Other tasks such as building demolition, more park bench installations and picnic table construction are likely to continue through the winter. MFIC is always looking for more volunteers who want to get involved with the improvements being undertaken.

### **PERSONNEL CHANGES**

**Liz Bouve**, who has headed the Recreation Department since 2002, decided to step down as Director effective October 1; she will, however, continue assisting on an as-needed basis until June 2009. During her tenure, Liz elevated the recreation department to a new level by expanding recreational offerings, especially in the area of adult programming. For the interim, **Gina Perow**, who had been named the Youth Program Coordinator, will be assuming the Director's responsibilities. Recycling Center/Transfer Station Manager **Jim Gordon** retired on October 15. During his three years in the position, he managed a "tight ship" and continued the customer-friendly atmosphere of former Manager Bob Webber. **Fernando "Fred" Cantu**, a 22-year member of the United State military, has been hired as his replacement. **Melissa Moretti** has joined our staff as Planning Assistant, **Jason Marshall** as Assistant to the Code Officer, and **Paul Gamache** as Bookkeeper.

### **RECREATION OFFERINGS**

- Registrations for Ski & Ride Program at Lost Valley are due by December 10.
- Look for game schedules for Boys and Girls Basketball, grades 3-6, in December.
- Adult basketball, 5:30-7:30pm, Wednesdays at Harpswell Islands School, no pre-registration necessary.
- Free Sunday Swim at Bowdoin College Pool, 4:30-5:30pm, no pre-registration.
- Look for information on a free Kindermusik Inter-generational Holiday celebration at multiple sites in Harpswell, December 7, 14 & 21.

For more information on recreation programs, contact Interim Recreation Director Gina Perow at 833-5771, ext. 103 or e-mail [harprec2@suscom-maine.net](mailto:harprec2@suscom-maine.net).

## **OPEN SPACE PLAN: CONSERVATION BY DESIGN FOR OUR FUTURE GENERATIONS**

The Conservation Commission has completed its draft Open Space Plan, a process initiated eighteen months ago with information gleaned from two public forums and a mailed questionnaire. **Now the Commission seeks your input again!** Comments are needed to fine tune the Draft Open Space Plan, and check for accuracy and clarification prior to presentation at the 2009 Harpswell Annual Meeting.

Copies of this draft report are available to read at the Planning Office of the Town Office, Cundy's Harbor and Orr's Island Libraries, and Curtis Memorial Library in Brunswick. You may also view and download it at [www.harpswell.maine.gov/](http://www.harpswell.maine.gov/).

Keeping in mind the rural and seafaring character of the Town, the process involved three major steps:

- Tabulating citizen comments; inventorying existing protected land; identifying the five key resources of fresh, salt and groundwater, natural habitats, scenic vistas, recreational opportunities, and cultural/historic/civic locations.
- Overlaying the above information in map format, and adding additional factors into the equation such as proximity to other protected sites, size of the site, lineal opportunity for expansion of recreation, continuity for the benefit of wildlife and bird populations, and protection of lands draining into wetlands, ponds and mudflats.
- Analyzing the data to determine which locations had the highest resource ratings, and were also designated as critical or endangered by the United States Fish and Wildlife Program.

From this process 12 Focus Areas were chosen for special review, and a number of recommendations and suggestions were made for their preservation. One of these recommendations is the distribution of stewardship "education packages" for landowners

Now is the time for Harpswell citizens to get involved. Please read the report and, send your comments to the Conservation Commission via Town Planner Carol Tukey at [ctukey@town.harpswell.me.us](mailto:ctukey@town.harpswell.me.us). There will be a public forum on the draft Open Space Plan on November 18, 6:30 p.m., at Harpswell Islands School.

## **ENERGY CONSERVATION: TIPS FROM EFFICIENCY MAINE—A PROGRAM OF THE MAINE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

Efficiency Maine is a statewide effort to promote the more efficient use of electricity, help Maine residents and businesses reduce electricity costs and improve Maine's environment. It was created in 2002 by the Maine Legislature with the passing of "An Act to Strengthen Energy Conservation." For more information on the annual report or energy efficiency, visit the PUC's Efficiency Maine website at [www.energymaine.com](http://www.energymaine.com) or call 1-866-ESMAINE.

### *No Cost Approaches*

**Turn Down the Thermostat**—turning down the thermostat by 1 degree F can save 25-30 gallons of heating oil per year. That's up to 3% of an average home's yearly consumption, or between \$105-126 per year at the \$4.26/gallon rate of heating oil. Turn down your thermostat to

55 degrees when the house is unoccupied. It takes about 1 hour to heat the average house to a desired temperature. When at home during the day, set your thermostat to 68 degrees which is a comfortable maximum temperature. At night when sleeping, 60 degrees should be comfortable.

**Adjust Window Treatments**—During the day, let sunlight in by opening curtains, blinds and shades over the windows facing the sun to keep your home warm and reduce heating needs. At night or when the sky is overcast, keep drapes and curtains closed to keep warmth indoors.

**Turn off lights** whenever they are not needed—even for one second. Keep bulbs and fixtures clean as dirt will absorb the light and reduce the efficiency

**Reduce Phantom Load**—Many appliances continue to draw power when they are switched off. These “phantom” loads occur in most appliances that use electricity, such as VCRs, televisions, stereos, computers, and kitchen appliances. In the average home, 75% of electricity used to power home electronics is consumed while the products are turned off. The recommended method for finding phantom loads is turning off all lights at night and looking for any LEDs or other glows in the house. Any device that requires resetting after a blackout or power surge is a cause of phantom load.

**Take Short showers**—You’ll use less hot water and save energy.

### *Low Cost Approaches*

**Seal Leaks**—Seal any leaks in your heating or cooling system ducts. Also fix leaks in water/steam heat pipes.

**Caulk & Weatherstrip**—By caulking and weatherstripping, you can cut your heating bills up to 10%. Weatherstrip doors and windows, and caulk air leaks around windows, doorframes, pipes and ducts.

**Insulate Windows**—Use clear plastic sheets to insulate windows during the heating season.

**Seal Off Receptacles**—Seal off electric receptacles and switch boxes with foam gaskets or fiberglass insulation.

**Insulate Pipes**—Insulate hot water pipes that provide heat to the rooms in your home. This will reduce heat loss in uninsulated areas and will help your heating system work more efficiently.

**Clean Boilers & Furnaces**—Make sure the boiler or furnace is cleaned and serviced by qualified personnel for optimum efficiency. Cleaning substantially extends the life of your heating system while ensuring that it’s operating safely. It can save you up to 10% on fuel costs.

**Install energy-saving showerheads**—You’ll reduce hot water use without affecting comfort.

**Lighting**—Replace incandescent bulbs with Compact Fluorescent Lamps—CFLs can give the same amount and quality of light as incandescent bulbs, yet use one-third the amount of energy and last ten times longer. Use dimmer switches or timers on lights.

## *Good Investments*

**Thermal Windows**—Install storm or thermal (replacement) windows. These tightly fitting windows give the benefit of double-pane glass. Air trapped between the two panes acts as a thermal insulator, keeping your heated air inside where it belongs. Be sure to get windows that have the new super-efficient low-emissivity glazing.

**Storm Doors**—Install storm doors to prevent warm air from escaping to the outside and remove window air conditioners in the winter, if possible. If not possible, use an insulated cover. This tip could save you up to 15% on your heating costs.

**Repair Holes**—Repair any holes in your roof, walls, doors, ceilings, windows and floors.

### **Insulate**—

- Insulate attic access and basement trap doors with R-19 insulation.
- You can cut your heating costs up to 25% simply by installing proper ceiling insulation to at least R-30 standards. Insulate walls, floors and heating ducts, too. This insulation will not only keep heat from escaping, but will also make your home more comfortable.

### **Lighting**—

- Look for the Energy Star® label when purchasing lighting fixtures. These fixtures meet federal energy-efficiency and quality guidelines, without a sacrifice in performance. These lights also operate at cooler temperatures.
- Replace halogen floor lamps and torchieres with compact fluorescent models. Halogen floor lamps pose a fire hazard due to the extremely hot temperatures produced by the high-wattage bulbs and cost more to operate.
- Use motion detectors, even outdoors. Lights turn on only when someone is walking near the house. This will save energy while providing security.

## **Energy Saving Tips for Appliances**

### ***Refrigerators & Freezers***

- Reduce your annual energy bill as much as \$160 by unplugging and properly disposing of your extra refrigerator or freezer.
- Open refrigerator/freezer doors only when necessary.
- Keep refrigerator coils (on the back or the bottom of the appliance) clean.
- Make sure the seals on refrigerator, freezer and oven doors fit tightly.
- Make sure your refrigerator and freezer are not running too cold. The temperature in your refrigerator should be 38-40 degrees F, and the freezer 0 to 5 degrees.
- Keep the freezer full of something, such as loaves of bread or milk jugs filled with water, to keep the cold air inside the freezer even when the door is open.
- Keep the fridge clean—extra containers require a refrigerator to work harder.

### ***Clothes Washers & Dryers***

- Use lower temperature settings on your washing machine, preferably the cold water cycle, and only use cold for rinses.
- Load the washing machine to capacity. Washing one large load will take less energy than washing two loads on a low or medium setting.
- Dry full loads when possible, but be careful not to overfill the dryer, because air needs to circulate around the clothes.

- Don't over-dry clothes that you are going to iron. Take clothes out of the dryer while still slightly damp to reduce the need for ironing—another big energy user.
- Hang clothes out to dry—outside or in the house.
- Clean the dryer filter after each use. A clogged filter will restrict airflow and reduce dryer performance.

#### ***Cooking Appliances***

- Use the smallest pan necessary to do the job. Match pan size to the element size.
- Don't preheat your oven. And try to avoid peeking by opening the oven door. Each peek can lower the oven temperature by 25 degrees.
- Cook complete meals of several dishes simultaneously in the oven.
- If you have a microwave oven, use it for reheating and cooking small quantities of food.

#### ***Dishwashers***

- Operate your dishwasher at full capacity.
- Choose a dishwasher with several wash cycle selections. If dishes are only slightly dirty, use the light or energy-saving wash cycle, it uses less water and runs for less time.

#### ***Water Heaters***

- Set your water heater thermostat at the lowest temperature that provides you with sufficient hot water, but not lower than 120° F.
- Wrap your water heater with a water heater blanket, especially if it is in an unheated area of your home.
- Use exhaust fans sparingly in your bathroom. In just one hour, they can remove a houseful of warmed air.

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